



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 09/828,081 | 04/06/2001 | Ramesh Keshavaraj | 5218 | 5484 |

7590 02/25/2003
Terry T. Moyer
P.O. Box 1927
Spartanburg, SC 29304

EXAMINER

SINGH, ARTI R

| | |
|----------|--------------|
| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
|----------|--------------|

1771

DATE MAILED: 02/25/2003

//

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

AS-1

| | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. | Applicant(s) | |
| | 09/828,081 | KESHAVARAJ, RAMESH | |
| | Examiner | Art Unit | |
| | Ms. Arti Singh | 1771 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 December 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 19-23 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) <u>6-8</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Claims 19-23 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim.

Election was made **without** traverse in Paper No. 10. Please cancel nonelected claims 19-23.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential structural cooperative relationships of elements, such omission amounting to a gap between the necessary structural connections. See MPEP § 2172.01. The omitted structural cooperative relationships are: It is unclear in from looking at the claims as how the tethers are attached to fabric? Stacked, sewn, end to end, the structural relation is unclear and found to be vague. As currently stated it appears to be just two strips of fabric, please clarify.

Double Patenting

4. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

Art Unit: 1771

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

5. Claims 1-6 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-7 of U.S. Patent No. 6,315,324. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they appear to be obvious variants of one another.

6. Claims 1-6 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-12 of copending Application No. 09/711,418. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they appear to be obvious variants of one another.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Art Unit: 1771

Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Johnson et al. (USPN 5,669,632). The invention of Johnson et al. is concerned with the internal tethers that are connected to a driver's side airbag, which is composed of one or two members, which the Examiner is equating to be the same as Applicant's "bag panels". Each of the aforesaid members has a plurality of radial straps. Central portions of the tether are sewn to the airbag front panel by a seam, which includes a linear portion crossing the center line (Examiner is equating this to be Applicant's "axis of radial symmetry") of each of the radial strips. In the case of a square seam, the square has rounded corners of a radius suitable for gradually transferring the load from the tether to the front panel to reduce stress concentrations (abstract). Central portions of the tethers (which may number up to four, are sewn to disclose a multi-spoked tether in the form of a central body and a plurality of radially extending straps. The central body is secured to the front panel of the airbag by means of a rectangular stitched seam comprised of linear segments crossing the centerline of each of the straps. In one embodiment of the invention, two or more such tethers are secured to the front panel by means of the same stitched seam (abstract and column 1, lines 55-63). Four spoke tethers cut from one piece of fabric experience stress concentrations between the spokes during airbag deployment. The two-piece tether illustrated in FIGS. 3 and 4 eliminates these concentrations. Each tether transmits forces in a uniaxial direction and does not transmit force to the perpendicular spoke, thereby reducing concentrations of stress between adjoining spokes. The two-piece tether is also less affected by unequal forces resulting from bag folds and deployment angle. The combination of the square seam and the two-piece tether has permitted 630d airbag fabric to be replaced with 420d material without a corresponding substantial loss of strength. Another important feature of the invention is illustrated in FIG. 3 but is also applicable to the embodiment of FIG. 2. This is

Art Unit: 1771

that the axial load on the tether should lie on an approximately 45 degrees angle to the warp of the tether fabric. The warp threads of a fabric are those, which extend the length of the fabric on a bolt. This is illustrated schematically by the cross hatch symbol on tether 30 which shows the warp W of its fabric at a 45 degree angle to the axial load L along the axis of the strap 38a (column 2, line 65- column 3, line 17).

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ms. Arti Singh whose telephone number is 703-305-0291. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00am to 6:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Terrel Morris can be reached on 703-308-2414. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-873-9310 for regular communications and 703-872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.



Ms. Arti Singh
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 1771

ars
February 24, 2003